

<https://www.msn.com/en-us/money/companies/it-s-time-to-call-it-the-big-tech-backlash-is-formally-over/ar-AA1LOox9>



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- After [Donald Trump's](#) election in 2016, all kinds of US lawmakers vowed to rein in American Big Tech companies.
- But Congress never passed any meaningful laws doing that.
- Now there doesn't seem to be any energy about regulating Big Tech at all.

In 2024, in what seemed like a landmark ruling, a federal judge said [Google](#) had an illegal monopoly in search.

On Tuesday, that same judge unveiled [Google's punishment](#), which amounts to ... not too much, all things considered.

There are plenty of places to find [analysis](#) of Judge Amit Mehta's ruling, but the fastest way to process it is to see what [Wall Street thinks](#): Google stock is up 9% on Wednesday.

And if you take a few more seconds, you can see how the specter of a major antitrust case has affected Google since the US government first filed suit in October 2020. Back then, [a share of Google](#) was worth about \$80. On Wednesday, it's \$231.

That is: Google investors have spent years mostly ignoring the idea that the company could face severe punishment from US regulators. This week confirmed that they were correct.

So maybe it's time to formally acknowledge that the larger push in the US to break up, or simply rein in, Big Tech is basically over.

That effort started in the mid-2010s, but really sped up after Donald Trump's first election in 2016. Back then, there was lots of talk about the fact that giant US tech companies had grown enormously powerful over the past couple decades, with very little oversight from anyone in the US government. There was bipartisan interest in changing that, we were told — even though it seemed clear that Democrats and Republicans had radically different criticisms of American tech companies.

Many hearings were held. Giant reports were [produced](#). And in both the Trump and Biden administrations, the US government investigated and then sued most of the Big Tech companies for abusing their power.

But in that same time, Congress never came close to passing any meaningful legislation that would restrain any American Big Tech companies from doing anything. (The sole anti-Big Tech [law Congress did pass was directed at China's TikTok](#), and [Trump has decided to simply ignore that law](#).)

During Joe Biden's tenure, his antitrust enforcers did try to restrain tech companies, partially through lawsuits, and partially through the threat of suits. [That certainly upset part of the Silicon Valley ecosystem](#), but it didn't seem to meaningfully constrain the biggest players.

And now, in the Trump 2.0 era, [Big Tech and Trump seem united](#) in their opposition to most regulations.

So all that's left of the anti-Big Tech push are federal lawsuits, which remain in place against the likes of Amazon, Apple, and Meta. It's still possible that one of those could result in a major loss for a Big Tech company — though even if that happens, appeals will stretch on for years.

But this week we saw what happens when the US government actually wins a court case against a Big Tech company — not that much at all.

That doesn't mean the Biggest Tech companies will always remain that way. Maybe other entities, like the European Union, will end up effectively regulating American tech. Or, as Mehta himself acknowledged in his ruling this week, [new competitors, like OpenAI, will end up dethroning](#) the giants.

But if you thought American lawmakers or courts would do it, this week might be the last time you think that way for a long time.